

**ROOM TEMPERATURE STABLE COMPETENT CELLS****ABSTRACT**

The invention relates to methods of producing storage-stable competent cells, preparations comprising such cells, and methods of using them. More particularly, the  
5 invention relates to improved methods of generating room-temperature stable dried competent cells by exposing cells to agents and conditions that increase the survival and better maintain the competence of dried competent cells. Improvements over prior art methods are achieved by modifications of the cell growth conditions, treatments of cells before, after, or during the induction of competence, modification of competence  
10 induction methods, and modifications to drying and post-drying process steps. The invention also provides kits comprising storage-stable competent cell preparations made according to the methods of the invention.